

# Get Ahead with SimVenture

Practical approaches and  
tailor-made activities for using  
SimVenture as a Learning and  
Teaching Resource



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[www.simventure.co.uk](http://www.simventure.co.uk)



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## Introduction

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This document has been created to help you teach/train with SimVenture. Whether you work in education, enterprise or the commercial training sector, the activities will help you to use the software in a meaningful and developmental way. There are 12 activities of increasing complexity and if you are working with learners who are new to SimVenture you should start with the very first activity and progress forward.

Within this document we use the word 'Learners' as a generic term to refer to students or delegates. Likewise, the term 'teachers' is used to refer to teachers or trainers.

The document has been written alongside the latest software (V4.5) but you should find most of the activities can be undertaken using recent versions of the software. To upgrade your existing licence, please contact us at the following address: [maintenance@simventure.co.uk](mailto:maintenance@simventure.co.uk). You will also find plenty of other free learning and teaching resources within the Learning Zone on the main SimVenture website.

## How to use the Guide

Within this guide you will find a range of teacher led activities, each summarised on a single page. The text at the top of the page provides you with a helpful summary overview of the activity. The notes below are provided to help you interpret this information.

<b>Teaching Approach:</b>	Directed Learning : You manage the simulation on a projected screen whilst the learners discuss the issues and make decisions for you to implement.  Guided Learning : The learners manage the simulation themselves, progressing alongside their peers under your guidance and instruction.  Active Learning : The learners manage the simulation themselves working independently within the context that you have previously defined for them.
<b>Target Age:</b>	Be aware that this is only a suggestion and you will always be the best judge of learner ability.
<b>Duration of Activity:</b>	You can easily extend the duration (through discussion, group work etc.) but not necessarily reduce the activity time.

The text below the summary information outlines in more detail what you need to do to run the activity effectively. Obviously, no two teaching situations will be the same and you will need to fine tune the session to best suit your needs.

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## Next Steps

We are very keen to build on the work within this document and share best practice, so do let us know your thoughts about this guide.

If you are prepared to create other teaching activities in the same one page format, we will look to include them in future editions.

Please contact us about either of these issues via the following email: [howtoguide@simventure.co.uk](mailto:howtoguide@simventure.co.uk)

## Activity 1 Developing an established business

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<b>Teaching Approach:</b>	Directed/Guided Learning
<b>Resource:</b>	Driving Lesson Scenario
<b>Target Age:</b>	14 and over
<b>Preparation Time:</b>	30 minutes
<b>Duration of Activity:</b>	1 hr +
<b>Recommended Group Size:</b>	2 or more



### Overview

This is an ideal activity to use when you start working with SimVenture for the first time. The activity uses a Scenario (Driving Lesson) that is built into the simulation (click 'Load Scenario' on the front screen). You will find that much of the preparatory work has been done for you and the briefing within the Scenario (Take a Test Drive) instructs learners to take the reins of an established company and experiment with business decisions without fear of failure. To print copies of the briefing go into the Scenario and click the 'Game' tab in the Tool Bar. Then click 'View Scenario Briefing' and 'Print' from the Tool Bar.

### Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to introduce the software and get learners used to the way the simulation works, without fear of 'business failure'. People will discover how to make decisions, run months and analyse information as well as develop a basic understanding of the relationship between the different functions within the software.

### Preparation

Assuming you understand how the software works, this task requires minimal preparation time. It is recommended that you follow through the suggested briefing activities (change the price of your product; take out a bank loan; run a month; print a report; and review your financial performance). You can also test the software by making different pricing changes to see how lowering the price stimulates demand in terms of enquiries and orders. This is a good exercise to repeat with people in order to show the how the simulation responds as decisions are made.

### Leading the Activity

This activity takes between 30 & 90 minutes depending on how you want to run the session. Since your group are likely to be new to the simulation, it's advisable to demonstrate the software using a single large projected screen first and then run through how the scenario works. You can ask learners to make decisions and then run the month so that everyone can see the consequences.

If time and learner confidence allows, people can then work in pairs or threes using the Driving Lesson Scenario. First ask them to read the briefing and once everyone has clicked the 'OK' button and selected an Advisor, ask people to spend up to 15 minutes completing the recommended briefing activities. As people become familiar with the software you can ask them to repeat the activity again and find the optimum price for generating maximum volume and/or value of orders.

### Review

Using this Scenario people will learn the basics of how the software works as well as discovering some of the key simulation features. You can use review time to obtain feedback about the software and/or the learning outcomes that relate to the course you are running.

## Activity 2 The Apprentice Scenarios

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<b>Teaching Approach:</b>	Guided Learning
<b>Resource:</b>	Apprentice Scenarios
<b>Target Age:</b>	14 and over
<b>Preparation Time:</b>	30 minutes
<b>Duration of Activity:</b>	60-90mins
<b>Recommended Group Size:</b>	2



### Overview

The Apprentice Scenarios are designed as a set of 'Entry Level Activities' which break down the key tasks involved in getting a start-up business off the ground in SimVenture. They each include a set of 'Teacher Notes' with resources as well as an integrated Scenario Briefing to support learners. In addition the scenarios provide 'in-game' guidance to explain the key tasks that need to be undertaken and provide reminders where appropriate.

### Purpose

These scenarios guide learners through a step-by-step process, providing them with a basic structure around which they can begin to develop their own strategies for business success. They also familiarise new users with the layout of SimVenture's pages and basic navigation through its features.

### Preparation

Print out the Teacher's Notes from the website and familiarise yourself with the activities. Print support resources as appropriate and consider the time that you have available to complete the scenarios. Each one varies in length with Apprentice-5 being the longest. You could cover the first four scenarios in one session before approaching the fifth as a stand-alone activity.

### Leading the Activity

Introduce the Scenarios by showing the Start-up Success Diagram (available on the Learning Zone). This outlines the process that they are about to work through within the Apprentice Scenarios. Draw their attention to the Scenario Briefings and explain that these can be accessed at any time within the scenario in the 'Game' sub-menu, accessed from the Tool Bar. As the scenarios include integrated guidance you can provide support as necessary and identify successes amongst the group to share with others. In this early stage it is useful to foster a culture of mutual support rather than competition to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to learn about the basics of using the software.

### Review

Encourage the groups to share their learning as you progress through each activity and refer back to the Start-up Success Diagram on a regular basis to re-emphasise its importance. The diagram is particularly useful to support learners as they attempt scenario 5.

Activity 3 provides natural progression on to developing a start-up with less support. Alternatively you may wish to focus on specific areas in more detail (see Activities 4, 5 & 6) or use teamwork (Activity 7) to provide support through the learning process.

## Activity 3 Getting a new business started

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### Start and grow your own business

Teaching Approach:	Active Learning
Resource:	New Game
Target Age :	14+
Preparation Time:	30 mins
Duration of Activity:	1 – 2 hours
Recommended Group	Size: 2



#### Overview

After completing the Apprentice Scenarios you may wish to present a similar activity with higher degree of challenge. By choosing 'New Game' from the welcome screen you will access the 'Start New Business' screen where, after entering a Company Name you can create a new SimVenture game. This screen also allows you to amend a variety of settings which alter the level of challenge for the game being loaded.

#### Purpose

New Games give learners the opportunity to experience starting a new business as opposed to managing an established business. Each new game retains the basic context of a computer manufacturing business but generates a unique set of data to define the 'virtual market' within which it will operate. The greater complexity that this creates generates the need to develop increasingly strategic approaches and raises awareness of issues related specifically to this phase in the development of a business. As this activity is intended as an early experience of the simulation, the target is simply to survive 6 months of trading and develop a position from which the business can grow.

#### Preparation

Load a new game and read the Scenario Briefing and Advisor Report to understand the process of getting a business off the ground. Then run a few months to see how the Advisor provides support from the outset. When working within a new game for the first time, it may be useful to reinforce the Start-up Success Diagram used alongside the Apprentice Scenarios. To begin with ask each group to load a New Game and change **only** the Starting Money (increase to £20K) to make the challenge slightly easier.

#### Leading the Activity

Organise the group into pairs and explain the particular nature of this scenario using the Scenario Briefing. Encourage peer support as successful businesses begin to emerge.

#### Review

This exercise should consolidate the learning developed within the Apprentice Scenarios. Activities 4, 5 & 6 move on to look at specific aspects in more detail. As an alternative you could repeat this activity, providing more challenge by lowering the amount of start-up money or by injecting an element of competition (see Activities 10 & 11).

## Activity 4 Market Segmentation Analysis

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<b>Teaching Approach:</b>	Active Learning – Paper-based
<b>Resource:</b>	Printed documents from software
<b>Target Age:</b>	14+
<b>Preparation Time:</b>	30 minutes
<b>Duration of Activity:</b>	Up to 1 hour
<b>Recommended Group Size:</b>	2 - 4



### Overview

In every SimVenture simulation, 6 market segments are revealed within a report whenever market research is conducted. Each market segment is distinct and information is provided about: market size; order frequency; price; order size and preferences. In groups, students analyse all the market information and make a decision as to which market segment they feel offers the most favourable commercial opportunity.

### Purpose

The objective of this exercise is to develop student analytical, teamwork and presentation skills as well as help them to appreciate how to segment niche markets effectively. The activity is designed so that groups of students analyse market information within the game and then present/share their findings and discuss their thinking with others in the class. The activity can be completed without students having to access the software during the lesson but requires you to prepare the printed documents in advance.

### Preparation

To prepare for this activity you need to start a new business in SimVenture, conduct some market research and then run the month. You can then visit the Market Research page and click 'View Report'. To print this page, press the Function key and 'Print Screen' on your keyboard and then open up a new file in MS Word. When you press the Control key and the letter 'V' you will paste the Report screen onto the new page. It is recommended that you format the page in landscape making all the printed information as clear as possible. (Apologies if this is slightly longwinded – in the next release a 'Print' button will be incorporated for the Research screens within SimVenture). Spend time reviewing each market segment and make your own notes about the relative merits of each market segment.

### Leading the Activity

Divide the class into groups of 2, 3 or 4 people. Then present SimVenture on a central screen and show how you conduct market research and view the 6 market segments. Explain to the learners that it is their task to decide on one market segment to target. You can assign up to 30 minutes for this activity; you will be surprised just how much people analyse the data – looking for the right answer! Once the analysis is complete, share or present ideas around the group and note the different choices made. Conclude the session by highlighting the importance of segmentation and market focus in business.

### Review

By completing this exercise, learners will be more able to analyse business information and make better decisions within the simulation. You can repeat or expand on the lesson by including competitor data or presenting it as an Active Case Study (see Activity 12) so that further information is available from within the simulation to inform the decisions.

## Activity 5 Financial Forecasting

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<b>Teaching Approach:</b>	Active Learning
<b>Resource:</b>	Driving Lesson Scenario
<b>Target Age:</b>	16+
<b>Preparation Time:</b>	Up to 30 minutes
<b>Duration of Activity:</b>	Up to 1 hour
<b>Recommended Group Size:</b>	1 - 4



### Overview

Financial forecasting is an important business and planning discipline. Within this activity learners will discover how business figures are projected forward and discover how to analyse basic figures within a profit and loss as well as cashflow forecast. The activity uses the Driving Lesson Scenario within the SimVenture software.

### Purpose

The objective of this activity is for people to understand the purpose and value of financial forecasting within a small business. To do this, learners will construct their own profit and loss and cashflow figures over a 12 month period and then analyse and interpret the data in such a way that allows them to identify business strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

### Preparation

Open the Driving Lesson Scenario within SimVenture. If you now click on the Profit & Loss button at the foot of the screen you will see a series of zeros in the right hand column. To generate a column of figures to work with, run a month in the simulation and then in the Finance menu, click on 'Forecasting' followed by 'Profit & Loss Forecast' and finally 'View detailed Profit Forecast'. This is the point within the simulation that learners need to reach in order to complete the activity.

Prepare the following questions for students to work through/discuss using the figures within the Scenario:

1. What are the key elements of a profit and loss forecast?
2. Click 'Copy previous month values to forecast' button. How well is the business performing in 12 months?
3. If the business maintains the forecast level of production and profitability, what costs may change?
4. What factors outside of the business may affect the gross margin position of 74%?
5. Click 'View Cashflow' and note any differences between a cashflow and profit & loss forecast?
6. Using the first month's figures only, now create a 12 month profit and loss forecast for the business.

### Leading the Activity

By all means embellish or change the suggested questions so that the activity fits with your own course or curriculum. Once you have highlighted the questions on a central screen you should be able to facilitate learning with each group. Conclude the activity with a short discussion to test acquired knowledge.

### Review

Some learners can find studying finance to be tedious. Allowing them to run their own simulated business as a pre-cursor to this activity, helps to develop this aspect in a meaningful way.



## Activity 6 Business Planning

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<b>Teaching Approach:</b>	Active Learning – Paper-based
<b>Resource:</b>	Printed documents from software
<b>Target Age:</b>	16+
<b>Preparation Time:</b>	Up to 1 hour
<b>Duration of Activity:</b>	4 – 8 hours
<b>Recommended Group Size:</b>	2 - 4



### Overview

Within the simulation all users have access to the Business Plan template within the Advisor section of the software. This activity focuses on learners creating their own business plan (for a product or service other than computers) once they have had a chance to run their own business within SimVenture.

### Purpose

The purpose of this activity is for people to apply learning from the simulation to create and develop a robust business plan for themselves. Having used SimVenture, learners should have a clearer and stronger grasp of how all the elements within business fit and relate to one another; and as a consequence be able to write a more meaningful and valuable plan.

### Preparation

This activity has greatest value if learners have previously started and run (from scratch) at least one successful business within SimVenture.

To start your preparation, review the Business Plan document by clicking 'Advisor' in the top right corner of the screen and then the 'Open Business Plan' button. If you wish, you can print out a copy of the plan, but note that the printed document does not include the advisor tips.

In class, ask learners to access the Plan within the Simulation and answer the questions within the template. They can use a business of their own choice (if you want to limit the exercise just ask people to consider the 3 'Background' questions and 2 questions with the 'Your Product' section). The exercise almost certainly needs to be finished outside of class since the full activity takes least four hours to complete. However, you can use the class time to clarify exactly what you are seeking. It is important to stress that you are looking for people to apply what they have learnt from creating and running their own SimVenture business.

### Leading the Activity

Be clear about what you are seeking and how the activity will be marked. In our opinion, the best plans are succinct and each section is tightly linked thus showing the quality of thinking behind the plan. If you can also link in financial forecasting (see Activity 5) you will be able to add further richness to the activity.

### Review

People who have never run a business often find it difficult to write an effective plan because the activity is either somewhat meaningless or just based on theoretical principles. Does the use of SimVenture enhance learner's ability to write an effective Business Plan?

## Activity 7 Teamwork

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<b>Teaching Approach:</b>	Active Learning
<b>Resource:</b>	SimVenture
<b>Target Age/Ability:</b>	14 and over
<b>Preparation Time:</b>	30 minutes
<b>Duration of Activity:</b>	1 hr +
<b>Recommended Group Size:</b>	4 or 5



### Overview

This is an ideal activity to use when you want to apply SimVenture in a team environment. This task is less to do with use of SimVenture and more to do with team dynamics and the roles learners adopt and 'play out' within their group.

In teams, learners will take on a directorial role to cover one of the four key areas within SimVenture. One person will be the Finance Director; another will be the Operations Director etc. If you have 5 people in the team, one person will be the overall Managing Director. This exercise (and variations on it) has been used very successfully in many different education institutions.

### Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is for learners to experience first-hand how different people, each with a specific role, work together in a team to achieve a desired objective. Within this objective, learners develop important communication, management and negotiation skills and become better able to work with other people.

### Preparation

Create group lists each consisting of 4 or 5 people and choose a SimVenture task (with clear goals and timescale) for them to complete (if you wish, you can select from the tasks within this guide). Once done, prepare a written brief which makes clear any lines of authority and how decisions can be made within each team. You may opt for a flat hierarchy so that teams develop their own decision making culture. Alternatively (and especially if you have teams of 5), make one person the Managing Director and make clear the extent to which this person influences group decisions.

### Leading the Activity

This activity is all about how people behave and work in teams. Once the task has been assigned it is important that time is spent monitoring groups so that you have some sense about the dynamic within each team. Individual behaviours will emerge and performance results will be different. Once the activity is complete you can ask people to self-assess their own behaviour within the team as well as offer peer appraisal. Depending on time and ability of the group you can also examine group behaviour in the light of theoretical models such as Belbin etc.

### Review

This activity helps people to understand their strengths and weaknesses as an individual within a group and how they contribute to overall teamwork. The exercise can be repeated with people taking different roles to see whether team performance is improved.

## Activity 8 Fine Tuning: Using an Active Case Study

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<b>Teaching Approach:</b>	Active Learning
<b>Resource:</b>	Fine Tuning Scenario
<b>Target Age :</b>	16+
<b>Preparation Time:</b>	15 mins
<b>Duration of Activity:</b>	45 mins
<b>Recommended Group Size:</b>	2 - 4



### Overview

This activity demonstrates how SimVenture can be used to generate contexts which can be used as the basis for a Case Study. Rather than being presented with a written case study though, learners are able to analyse the data within an existing SimVenture saved game. This scenario is centered on a business that is making regular sales but has failed to generate any significant profits. A number of issues exist within the business that need identifying and resolving in order to take the business forward.

### Purpose

This activity requires learners to analyse and assess the situation thoroughly before presenting their ideas for the development of the business. It challenges them demonstrate their understanding of a range of data and to present robust plans in a coherent way.

### Preparation

Review the scenario briefing yourself and familiarise yourself with the situation. Run the first few months making alterations as suggested in the briefing to get a sense of the challenges that the scenario presents. Repeat the process by re-loading the scenario and trying different approaches to see how the software responds. You will see that the product design does not match the preferences indicated for Professional Services and that the selling price provides too small a margin to be sustainable.

### Leading the Activity

Introduce the scenario by displaying the briefing and focusing on the suggestions it contains. Emphasis that this activity does not require them to run any months of the simulation and impress upon them the need to analyse the starting position and prepare a strategy. Depending upon their ability, you may wish to guide them to areas where they will find issues to deal with or specify areas you would particularly like them to analyse. Explain the format of their presentations which could be verbal, written or ICT based depending upon the time and resources available

### Review

The key focus in this activity is on the analysis of information and how this can be used to present a case for action. You may wish to focus on the quality of analysis and understanding of the issues or consider the quality of the presentation in both style and substance. This activity can easily be replicated in a range of ways (see Activity 12) with varying degrees of complexity and challenge.

## Activity 9 Managing a Micro-Business

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<b>Teaching Approach:</b>	Active Learning
<b>Resource:</b>	Growing Pains Scenario
<b>Target Age :</b>	18+
<b>Preparation Time:</b>	30mins
<b>Duration of Activity:</b>	1 – 2 hours
<b>Recommended Group Size:</b>	2 - 4



### Overview

This activity takes learners to the 'Moderate' level of SimVenture whilst still providing them with a degree of direction and support. As such it is recommended that you only use this activity once your learners have had a degree of experience working with the software, allowing them to make a broad appraisal of the business and consider a range of strategies to take it forward. As the scenario includes a written brief your own preparation time is minimised. Click 'Load Scenario' from the SimVenture welcome screen before selecting 'Growing Pains' and clicking 'OK' to load the scenario.

### Purpose

This activity encourages learners to consider the challenges of growing a business from a reasonably successful starting point. They will discover the need to assess the starting position carefully before planning for growth to meet with challenges relating to cashflow and capacity. It also presents them with quantifiable targets to achieve, which raises the level of challenge and creates the need to consider forecasting to check that progress is 'on-track'.

### Preparation

Take some time to familiarise yourself with the scenario by looking at the briefing, perhaps running the first few months to get a feel for the level of challenge. Simply running months without any actions is often a good way to assess the issues that learners will face. If you do this you will see that enquiries and orders continue to flow in creating modest monthly profits. In order to grow however, the business needs to invest without creating financial instability, requiring a careful balancing act.

### Leading the Activity

Introduce the scenario by displaying the briefing and discussing its contents. Draw the learners' attention to the 12 month timescale of the scenario and impress upon them the need to analyse the starting position and prepare a strategy. (You might wish to show them the impact of running a few months to highlight some of the challenges they face.)

### Review

Use review time to consider the approaches taken by different groups, or focus on a specific issue such as avoiding cashflow issues which has multiple solutions.

## Activity 10 Business Start-up Competition

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<b>Teaching Approach:</b>	Active Learning
<b>Resource:</b>	SimVenture
<b>Target Age:</b>	14+
<b>Preparation Time:</b>	Minimum 1 hour
<b>Duration of Activity:</b>	Minimum 1 hour
<b>Recommended Group Size:</b>	2 - 4



### Overview

SimVenture has proved itself to be an invaluable resource for staging business competitions. With relatively little planning and organisational input, you can run very successful events that will engage large numbers of people. Many schools, colleges, universities and even commercial organisations have used the software for competitions with up to 120 people at a time. Feedback from events has been consistently positive.

### Purpose

The objective of this activity is for people (who work in teams) to start and run their own virtual business and compete against others.

### Preparation

Ahead of any competition ensure people have familiarised themselves with SimVenture. The Driving Lesson Scenario is an ideal environment to do this. Plan for teams of between 2 & 4 people and write out and share key competition rules that cover issues such as: team structure; simulation starting point; real time duration; winning criteria; and judging process.

All teams need to start from the same position and we have provided an example within the Learning Zone on our website. If you decide to create your own saved game for a competition make sure you have thought about the following issues: level of difficulty; start date; and start-up capital. Any competition should last for a minimum of 1 hour to allow time to develop business to a reasonable stage. Finally, decide how you will judge the winner. The simple way is to use the overall net profit figure or the value of the company; details for both can be found in the 'Performance Report'.

### Leading the Activity

For competitions, most of the work is in the preparation and planning (see also Guidance – Running Competitions on the Learning Zone). If the rules are clearly communicated and everyone is able to start their business from the same point, your work is largely done. You may wish to offer support to teams if they need help but be clear at the outset what advice is available. You could even charge for questions that you answer and deduct amounts from final scores. When the competition is over, give yourself time to collate the results.

### Review

If time allows, ask teams to make presentations about how they ran their business and allocate scores to this part of the process. Making it clear that teamwork and presentation skills are all part of the marks adds a powerful and different dynamic to the activity.

## Activity 11 Business Growth Competition

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<b>Teaching Approach:</b>	Active Learning
<b>Resource:</b>	Business Growth Competition File
<b>Target Age :</b>	14+
<b>Preparation Time:</b>	30mins
<b>Duration of Activity:</b>	1 – 1.5 hours
<b>Recommended Group Size:</b>	2 - 4



### Overview

This activity creates a competitive environment where each group begins with an identical situation and progress is dependent on the quality of analysis and decision making. Groups are challenged to take a business as far as they can within a specified period of time and are judged by set criteria.

### Purpose

This activity creates the need to work under pressure of time requiring learners to consider how they can work most effectively as a team. It also encourages learners to analyse the situation before developing a strategy which they must then monitor, evaluate and amend as necessary.

### Preparation

Download the appropriate saved game from the SimVenture website and print enough copies of the competition brief for each participating team. Familiarise yourself with the competition saved game and review the briefing notes included. Copy the Saved Game file onto an accessible location on your network or on to a memory stick to allow access on each of the computers being used.

### Leading the Activity

Explain to the groups that they will have a specific amount of time to develop the business. At a specific time they will be judged on the 'Company Valuation' figure which can be found in the 'Game' sub-menu by clicking 'Performance Report'. Remind them that they can run as many months as they like and suggest that spending some time planning their activities may prove valuable in the long run. Reiterate the advice provided in the briefing notes before commencing the competition. Inform the group as key time intervals are reached and on completion of the allocated time give them the option to run one more month if they have not already reached the 36<sup>th</sup> month.

### Review

Making the results public is a good way to inject a sense of fun although you will want to decide yourself how this is handled within the session. Whilst the results will be determined by the quality of the decisions made it is also valuable to ask the groups to reflect on the challenges they have faced. This provides an opportunity for those who have been less successful to show their understanding and demonstrate their learning. This can easily be included as part of the competition process by incorporating an assessed presentation from each group following completion of the saved game.

## Activity 12 Creating an Active Case Study

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Paper based Case Studies are regularly used to encourage analysis and evaluation. The facility to print data from within SimVenture means that you can easily generate infinite combinations to challenge your learners by presenting them with paper based challenges (see Activity 4).

### Adding Value

SimVenture can enhance this approach because it includes a wealth of information that would be too complex to present on paper. So by presenting a summary report **and** allowing learners access to a saved game, they can easily explore when decisions were made, what their impact was and what external factors may have come into play.

This approach takes away the hypothetical nature of some paper based scenarios that cannot provide enough background information to allow for thorough interpretation. It also means that learners can challenge each other's interpretations using the data included within the software and their previous experience of running businesses within that environment.

It also means that once the analysis has taken place, the conclusions and diagnoses can also be tested within the simulation. Strategic planning becomes more meaningful when the plan can be subsequently implemented and evaluated. In addition, learners will come to appreciate that forecasts are merely estimates and plans need monitoring to allow for improvement.

### 'Off the peg' or Bespoke

You can easily use the integrated scenarios as the basis for an active case study, simply save them as they are or develop them for a few months first to create some 'issues'. Or you can create your own saved games from scratch making infinite variations available to you.

The following examples provide an easy way to experience the value of the active case study approach.

### Examples

Examples 1 & 2 can be used 'off the peg' whilst 3 & 4 would need to be created from a new game.

1. Use a Scenario such as Fine Tuning or Growing Pains. Ask learners to act as non-executive Directors and use the data within a saved game to generate questions they may wish to ask at a hypothetical board meeting.
2. Use the Driving Lesson scenario as the basis for this activity. Provide an 'existing' product design and 'proposed' selling price. Ask the learners to decide which segment would be the most appropriate to target and what changes they might make to the proposals.
3. Load a New Game and save it as a 'base file'. Using this as a starting point, create 3 different businesses, saving each game after 6 months. Present your learners with each 'Active Case Study' asking them to select the one which they feel would offer the best prospect for an investor. You could use the activity as a basis for presentations, written reports or a discussion.
4. Create an established business to a point where it needs to expand. Ask the learners to act as business consultants offering advice for the best way to take the business forward.